

Statement Roundup | Biden Administration Protects U.S. Outer Continental Shelf areas off the East and West coasts, the eastern Gulf of Mexico, and additional portions of the Northern Bering Sea in Alaska

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Table of Contents

Members of Congress + Administration Officials	5
Secretary Deb Haaland President Biden Takes Action to Protect America’s Coastlines from Future Oil and Gas Leasing	5
Wyden, Merkley, Bonamici, Hoyle Applaud Biden Administration Ban on New Offshore Oil and Gas Drilling Off of U.S. Coasts	6
Warner & Kaine Applaud Ban on New Offshore Drilling Off the Coast of Virginia	7
Ranking Member Huffman Celebrates Biden Action to Protect Oceans and Coasts from Offshore Drilling	8
Reps. Grijalva, Pallone Celebrate Biden Action to Permanently Ban Offshore Drilling Along Majority of U.S. Coastline	9
Rep. Frank Pallone After Pallone’s Push, Biden Permanently Protects Atlantic and Other Coastal Waters from Oil Drilling	9
Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse: Whitehouse Lauds President Biden for Shielding Rhode Island Coast from Drilling	11
Senator Markey Applauds Biden Administration Announcement to Protect Atlantic and Pacific Coasts from Offshore Drilling	11
U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor Cheers Permanent Prohibition on Oil Drilling Off Florida Gulf Coast Beaches	12
Rep. Carbajal’s 8-Year Push to Ban New Offshore Drilling Off Central Coast Completed as President Biden Takes Sweeping Executive Action	13
Rep. Maxwell Frost	14
Senator Adam Schiff	15
Congresswoman Jasmine Crockett	15
Senator Jack Reed	15
Senator Jeanne Shaheen	15
Senator Patty Murray	15
Senator Rick Scott	15
Rep. Nydia Velazquez	16
Rep. Chellie Pingree	16
Rep. Don Beyer	16
Governors and State Officials	16
Governor Newsom issues statement on President Biden’s action to protect Pacific Coast	16
Governor Josh Stein (NC)	16
Wade Crowfoot (CA Secretary for Natural Resources)	17
Local Elected Officials	17
Mayor of St. Augustine	17
Mayor of Broward County	17
Wilmington City Councilman and Republican Charlie Rivenbark	17
National Organizations	18
Sierra Club Sierra Club Statement on New Federal Protections for U.S. Oceans	18
Surfrider Surfrider Applauds the Biden Administration for Protecting U.S. Coasts From New	

Offshore Oil Drilling	19
Oceana President Biden Builds on Bipartisan Tradition by Protecting U.S. Coastlines from Offshore Drilling	21
Earthjustice Earthjustice Applauds White House Withdrawal of American Offshore Territory from Future Oil-and-Gas Development	22
LCV Statement on New Protections for 625 Million Acres of U.S. Waters	23
Greenpeace USA Welcomes Biden Administration’s Ocean Protections	23
Natural Resources Defense Council	24
GreenLatinos	24
Surf Industry Members Association	24
Monterey Bay Aquarium	24
Shedd Aquarium	25
Center For American Progress	25
Defenders of Wildlife	25
Aquarium Conservation Partnership	25
Ocean Defense Initiative	26
Ocean Foundation	26
Next 100 Coalition	26
National Aquarium	26
Healthy Ocean Coalition	27
Climate Action Campaign	27
Creation Justice Ministries	27
American Bird Conservancy	27
Friends of the Earth	28
Sachamama	28
Waterkeeper Alliance	28
Azul	28
Evergreen Action	29
Blue Frontier	29
National Ocean Protection Coalition.	29
Climate Power	29
Futureswell	30
Ocean Alliance North America	30
Ocean Conservancy	30
A Jewish Call to Climate Action	31
National Religious Partnership for the Environment	31
Executive Director of Save Our Shores	31
Urban Ocean Lab	31
Hispanic Access Foundation	32
Next Gen America	32
Waterspirit	32

International, Regional, State, Local, and Tribal Organizations	32
Healthy Gulf	32
Center for Environmental Law at Tulane University	33
Business Alliance for Protecting the Atlantic Coast	33
Business Alliance for Protecting the Pacific Coast	33
Association of Village Council Presidents	33
Kawerak, Inc.	34
Bering Sea Elders Group	34
Center for Western Priorities: STATEMENT: Biden protects over 625 million acres of U.S. waters from offshore drilling	34
The Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk	35
The Ocean Project	35
Seattle Aquarium	35
Calusa Waterkeeper	35
Northern Chumash Tribal Council	36
Savannah Riverkeeper	36
Carolina Ocean Alliance	36
Bow Seat Future Blue Youth Council	36
Secretary General Karoline Andaur of the WWF World Wildlife Fund for Nature	37
South Carolina Small Business Chamber of Commerce	37
Tualatin Riverkeepers	37
Riverkeeper	37
Environmental Defense Center	38

Members of Congress + Administration Officials

Secretary Deb Haaland | [President Biden Takes Action to Protect America's Coastlines from Future Oil and Gas Leasing](#)

WASHINGTON — Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland today celebrated President Biden's decision to [withdraw certain areas offshore the United States from all future oil and natural gas leasing](#). Today's action recognizes that the environmental and economic risks and harms that would result from drilling in these areas outweigh any limited fossil fuel resource potential. With these withdrawals, President Biden is protecting coastal communities, marine ecosystems, and local economies - including fishing, recreation and tourism - from oil spills and other impacts of offshore drilling.

"President Biden's actions today are part of our work across this Administration to make bold and enduring changes that recognize the impact of oil and gas drilling on our nation's coastlines," said Secretary Haaland. "Today, the President is taking action that reflects what states, Tribes and local communities have shared with us – a strong and overwhelming need to support resilient oceans and coastlines by protecting them from unnecessary oil and gas development."

Using his authority under section 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA), President Biden today issued memoranda to withdraw significant portions of the Outer Continental Shelf from future oil and natural gas leasing, including the entire U.S. Pacific and Eastern Atlantic coasts, the Eastern Gulf of Mexico, and the remainder of the Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience Area offshore Alaska. The withdrawal areas announced today encompass more than 625 million acres – and represent the largest withdrawal in U.S. history. On federal lands and waters, oil production in 2024 is at an all-time high. In fiscal year 2023, the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) produced approximately 675 million barrels of oil and 796 billion cubic feet of gas, accounting for roughly 14 percent of all oil production and two percent of natural gas production in the United States. Nearly all of this production is in the Western and Central Gulf of Mexico, where industry has yet to produce on more than 80 percent of the 12 million acres already under lease.

The National OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2024-2029 includes three potential oil and gas lease sales in the Gulf of Mexico planning areas, which are not impacted by today's action. In contrast, the previous Administration's Draft Proposed 5-year Program included 47 lease sales and included potential oil and gas auctions in all planning areas subject to these withdrawals – a proposal that garnered significant bipartisan opposition from coast to coast. Industry activity in the newly withdrawn areas has been very low, historically. There is no active oil and gas exploration and development along the eastern U.S. Atlantic or in the Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience Area. There are approximately 30 decades-old existing leases offshore southern California, and approximately a dozen in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico. Nothing in the withdrawals affects rights under existing leases.

The President's memoranda and maps of the areas withdrawn will be made available on the [White House's website](#).

Wyden, Merkley, Bonamici, Hoyle Applaud Biden Administration Ban on New Offshore Oil and Gas Drilling Off of U.S. Coasts

[Wyden, Merkley, Bonamici, Hoyle Applaud Biden Administration Ban on New Offshore Oil and Gas Drilling Off of U.S. Coasts](#)

Washington D.C.—U.S. Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley with U.S. Representatives Suzanne Bonamici and Val Hoyle today applauded the Biden Administration's executive action to permanently ban offshore oil and gas drilling on 625 million acres of coastal waters along the entire West Coast, East Coast, the eastern Gulf of Mexico, and portions of Alaska's Northern Bering Sea.

"Combating the climate crisis demands bold and decisive action like this that help to curb the use of harmful fossil fuels," Wyden said. "Oregonians have experienced dramatic wildfires, ice storms and other dangerous weather events worsened by the climate crisis. This ban on new leases for reckless offshore drilling protects the precious Oregon Coast, and I'll keep pushing to protect coastal communities in Oregon and across the nation."

"Offshore drilling guarantees future oil spills with devastating consequences: from oiled beaches to catastrophic damage to tourism, commercial sport fishing, and ocean ecosystems," Merkley said. "The Oregon Delegation led the charge to protect the Oregon Coast and beyond from offshore oil and gas drilling, and the president's actions will help build a cleaner, more sustainable energy future for all Americans."

"The Oregon Coast is a pristine area that should not be destroyed for harmful, short-sighted ventures like offshore drilling," said Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici. "I'm grateful that the Biden-Harris administration is taking action to protect the NW coast and limit damage from the climate crisis. I will continue to protect coastal communities for future generations and for all who rely on a healthy ocean and clean waterways."

"No one who is paying attention can deny the effects of climate change with the extreme weather that has been devastating to our state and the world," Rep. Hoyle said. "It's both urgent and imperative that we move away from fossil fuels to a green energy economy with local family wage jobs. The U.S. already has many of open leases for drilling fossil fuels and I want to thank President Biden for doing the right thing for the future of our planet."

The federal ban on new leases for offshore gas and oil drilling is authorized under Section 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act. The withdrawals have no expiration date, and prohibit all future oil and natural gas leasing in the areas withdrawn.

Wyden, Merkley, Bonamici and Hoyle have been champions for coastal communities that oppose harmful oil and gas drilling in Oregon and nationwide. Wyden and Merkley joined

Senate colleagues with Bonamici joining House colleagues to urge the Biden Administration to take this action to protect unleased and at-risk areas of the Outer Continental Shelf from fossil fuel development. For years, Wyden, Merkley, Bonamici and Hoyle have championed the West Coast Ocean Protection Act in an effort to achieve this goal. Today's action followed another letter Merkley and Wyden sent in 2022 to Interior Secretary Deb Haaland to not renew leases across all planning areas in any proposed or final five-year outer continental shelf (OCS) oil and gas leasing program. Wyden and Merkley also introduced the Plug Offshore Wells Act in December that would address the growing threat of abandoned offshore oil and gas infrastructure to marine ecosystems and the environment.

Warner & Kaine Applaud Ban on New Offshore Drilling Off the Coast of Virginia

[Warner & Kaine Applaud Ban on New Offshore Drilling Off the Coast of Virginia](#)

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, U.S. Senators Mark R. Warner and Tim Kaine (both D-VA) applauded President Biden's decision to ban new offshore oil and gas drilling off the coast of Virginia:

“We welcome President Biden's action to protect Virginia's vibrant coastal communities. We've heard from Virginians in Hampton Roads and on the Eastern Shore who have expressed concerns about the risks of offshore drilling on their communities. This action is critical to protecting Virginia's coastal waters from pollution and potential oil spills and supporting the region's economy, which relies heavily on commercial and recreational fishing, aquaculture, tourism, and the Port of Virginia. We'll continue to advocate for Virginia's coastal communities to ensure they continue to thrive.”

Nearly forty percent of Americans live in coastal counties, and nearly 400 municipalities and over 2,300 elected officials have opposed the expansion of offshore drilling. Virginia banned offshore drilling in state waters in 2020, but it does not have jurisdiction over federal waters.

The senators previously called for an offshore drilling ban along Virginia's coastline in September 2020 after the Trump Administration banned offshore drilling off the coasts of Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina. In January 2018, when the Trump Administration was considering a new proposal on offshore drilling, the senators sent a letter to the Department of the Interior asking the department to add public meetings in Virginia Beach and on the Eastern Shore to give local residents the opportunity to share their views. Also in January 2018, Kaine held a roundtable in Virginia Beach to discuss the impacts of offshore drilling off Virginia's coast.

###

Ranking Member Huffman Celebrates Biden Action to Protect Oceans and Coasts from Offshore Drilling

WASHINGTON – U.S. House Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Jared Huffman (D-Calif.) today issued the following statement on President Biden’s action to use his authority under 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to permanently protect unleased and at-risk areas of the outer continental shelf from offshore oil and gas development.

“Today’s action cements President Biden’s historic climate legacy by permanently protecting much of our oceans, coastal communities, and local economies from Big Oil’s long record of exploitation,” said Ranking Member Huffman. “Since day one of his administration, President Biden has understood that facing the climate crisis and protecting Americans demands visionary leadership and bold action. I’m grateful for the historic progress this administration has made both today and over the past four years.

“Importantly, today’s action is Trump-proof; the courts have already defended the 12(a) authority against previous attacks. We know the President-elect will do everything in his power to enact his ‘drill baby drill’ agenda, but fortunately for us all, handing our oceans over to Big Oil billionaires will be off the table.”

BACKGROUND

On Nov. 15, 2024, Ranking Member Huffman joined then-Ranking Member Raúl M. Grijalva (D-Ariz.), Energy and Commerce Committee Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-N.J.), and other congressional Democrats on a letter urging President Biden to use the 12(a) authority to block offshore drilling in unleased and at-risk areas of the outer continental shelf. In their letter, the lawmakers pointed to a determination by the District Court for Alaska in 2017 that 12(a) does not give a president authority to revoke prior withdrawals.

Reps. Grijalva and Pallone also celebrated the announcement today:

“As his administration comes to a close, I’m grateful for the bold, transformative action President Biden has taken to chart a cleaner, safer energy future for all Americans,” said Rep. Grijalva. “The offshore oil and gas industry routinely subjects coastal communities and workers to toxic oil spills and pollution, all while the same communities are bearing the brunt of climate-caused storm surges and flooding. Although there is still work to be done, today’s action to block offshore drilling off the entire East Coast, the eastern Gulf, much of the Pacific, and the Northern Bering Sea is a monumental step in the progress we need to protect communities, the environment, and future generations from climate change.”

“For decades, I’ve fought to protect our shores from those who would sell off our way of life to make a buck from dangerous offshore drilling, and today, that fight has paid off,” said Rep. Pallone. “President Biden’s action ensures that our coasts are permanently off-limits to ‘drill

baby, drill' exploitation. This is a commonsense win for everyone who relies on clean, thriving oceans. Protecting our coastal waters from oil drilling safeguards our fishing and tourism economy and critically-endangered North Atlantic right whales.”

[Reps. Grijalva, Pallone Celebrate Biden Action to Permanently Ban Offshore Drilling Along Majority of U.S. Coastline](#)

WASHINGTON – Representatives Raúl M. Grijalva (AZ-07) and Frank Pallone, Jr. (NJ-06) today celebrated President Biden’s action to use his authority under 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to permanently ban offshore oil and gas drilling along the entire East coast, the eastern Gulf of Mexico, the Pacific off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California, and additional portions of the Northern Bering Sea in Alaska.

“As his administration comes to a close, I’m grateful for the bold, transformative action President Biden has taken to chart a cleaner, safer energy future for all Americans,” said Rep. Grijalva. “The offshore oil and gas industry routinely subjects coastal communities and workers to toxic oil spills and pollution, all while the same communities are bearing the brunt of climate-caused storm surges and flooding. Although there is still work to be done, today’s action to block offshore drilling off the entire East Coast, the eastern Gulf, much of the Pacific, and the Northern Bering Sea is a monumental step in the progress we need to protect communities, the environment, and future generations from climate change.”

“For decades, I’ve fought to protect our shores from those who would sell off our way of life to make a buck from dangerous offshore drilling, and today, that fight has paid off,” said Rep. Pallone. “President Biden’s action ensures that our coasts are permanently off-limits to ‘drill baby, drill’ exploitation. This is a commonsense win for everyone who relies on clean, thriving oceans. Protecting our coastal waters from oil drilling safeguards our fishing and tourism economy and critically-endangered North Atlantic right whales.”

Rep. Frank Pallone | [After Pallone’s Push, Biden Permanently Protects Atlantic and Other Coastal Waters from Oil Drilling](#)

[Rep. Frank Pallone](#): Pres. Biden just made it official: offshore drilling is permanently banned along the East & West Coasts! (Twitter)

After years of fighting to protect our shores—from leading anti-drilling legislation to pressing the President directly—this moment is a victory for our coastal communities.

WASHINGTON, DC – Following years of tireless advocacy by Congressman Frank Pallone (NJ-06), President Joe Biden has permanently prohibited offshore oil and gas development along the entire East and West Coasts, as well as the Eastern Gulf of Mexico and areas of the Northern Bering Sea off Alaska. Pallone pushed Biden to use his authority under Section 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to issue an Executive Order that safeguards coastal communities and ecosystems from the dangers of fossil fuel development.

“For decades, I’ve fought to protect our shores from those who would sell off our way of life to make a buck from dangerous offshore drilling, and today, that fight has paid off,” said Pallone. “President Biden’s action ensures that our coasts are permanently off-limits to ‘drill baby, drill’ exploitation. This is a commonsense win for everyone who relies on clean, thriving oceans. Protecting our coastal waters from oil drilling safeguards our fishing and tourism economy and critically-endangered North Atlantic right whales.”

As recently as November, Pallone co-led a letter to President Biden with Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva (D-Ariz.) signed by House Democrats, highlighting the economic, environmental, and public health risks posed by offshore drilling and urging the administration to cement its climate and conservation legacy by taking this decisive step.

“By taking this bold move, President Biden is showing the world that the United States can lead in combating the climate and wildlife extinction crises,” Pallone added. “This decision prioritizes clean, safe energy over the outdated and dangerous practices of fossil fuel extraction. It reflects the hard work and values of coastal communities like ours that have never stopped fighting for a better, cleaner future.”

“As his administration comes to a close, I’m grateful for the bold, transformative action President Biden has taken to chart a cleaner, safer energy future for all Americans,” said Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva (D-Ariz.). “The offshore oil and gas industry routinely subjects coastal communities and workers to toxic oil spills and pollution, all while the same communities are bearing the brunt of climate-caused storm surges and flooding. Although there is still work to be done, today’s action to block offshore drilling off the entire East Coast, the eastern Gulf, much of the Pacific, and the Northern Bering Sea is a monumental step in the progress we need to protect communities, the environment, and future generations from climate change.”

Protecting American coasts from offshore drilling is widely popular, with nearly two-thirds of registered voters expressing support. More than 390 municipalities across the Atlantic, Pacific, and Gulf coasts have formally opposed the expansion of offshore drilling.

Presidents of both political parties have used their 12(a) authority to protect U.S. waters from energy development. Barring an act of Congress, President Biden’s Executive Order is permanent.

This decision is part of the Biden administration’s climate legacy, which includes historic investments in affordable clean energy and good-paying jobs through the Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law—efforts Pallone spearheaded as the top Democrat on the House Energy and Commerce Committee. It also significantly advances President Biden’s goal to protect 30 percent of U.S. oceans by 2030.

Environmental groups and local leaders commended Pallone's decades of advocacy, including the COAST Anti-Drilling Act (HR 1320), crediting his leadership with helping to secure this critical protection for the Jersey Shore and the nation.

Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse: [Whitehouse Lauds President Biden for Shielding Rhode Island Coast from Drilling](#)

Washington, DC – U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Ranking Member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, today lauded President Joe Biden for shielding the Rhode Island coast from offshore oil and gas drilling.

“President Biden has done well by Rhode Islanders in protecting our coast from the economic and environmental dangers of offshore drilling. I’m hopeful that this action will put up a roadblock that will prevent the Trump administration from selling out the Atlantic to the top-bidding polluter,” said Whitehouse. “I’ve been on the front lines of helping the Ocean State recover after oil spills, and I’m keenly aware of just how damaging offshore accidents can be.”

Whitehouse has long sponsored legislation to permanently ban offshore oil and gas drilling off the coast of New England.

While working in the Rhode Island Attorney General's office, Whitehouse assisted Attorney General James O'Neill with the state's response to the 1989 World Prodigy oil spill. As U.S. Attorney, Whitehouse led the federal response to the 1996 North Cape oil spill, securing what was then the largest settlement payment in Rhode Island history.

[Senator Markey Applauds Biden Administration Announcement to Protect Atlantic and Pacific Coasts from Offshore Drilling](#)

[Sen. Ed Markey](#): I applaud @POTUS's decision to ban offshore drilling on the East Coast to ensure that our ocean is kept safe from oil spills and environmental devastation. On behalf of our fishermen, our seaside communities, and our ecosystem—thank you.

Washington (January 6, 2025) - Senator Edward J. Markey, a member of the Environment and Public Works Committee, released the following statement today after the Biden administration announced a block of offshore oil and gas drilling across more than 625 million acres of federal waters.


“By banning offshore oil drilling on the East Coast, President Biden's bold action will ensure that New England's breathtaking and treasured ocean is kept safe from oil spills and environmental devastation,” said Senator Markey. “Our fishermen, seaside communities, and precious ecosystems deserve this peace of mind and this protection from pollution. I applaud this decision to put the safeguarding of Massachusetts' economy, cultural heritage, and environment above the interests of Big Oil barons.”

Senator Markey has long been an opponent of offshore drilling off the East Coast, leading his colleagues in calling on the Trump administration to protect the coastlines of the United States from offshore oil drilling in 2017 and introducing legislation prohibit the Interior Secretary from revising the approved offshore drilling plan to open up new areas to drilling.

Senator Markey was the leading Congressional investigator into the BP oil spill. In 2010, as then-Chair of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and the Environment, Senator Markey led a bipartisan Congressional delegation to the Gulf of Mexico to assess the Deepwater Horizon oil spill and its impacts. Senator Markey also chaired the first Congressional hearing on Deepwater Horizon to investigate the spill. Senator Markey succeeded in getting major provisions of his oil spill legislation included in the bipartisan Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2022, which was included in the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for the Fiscal Year 2023.

Senator Markey is a co-sponsor of the Stop Arctic Ocean Drilling Act, which would prevent any new or renewed leases for the exploration, development, or production of oil, natural gas, or any other mineral in the Arctic Ocean Planning Area.

[U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor](#) Cheers Permanent Prohibition on Oil Drilling Off Florida Gulf Coast Beaches

 Big win for Florida! Offshore oil drilling is now permanently banned along our Gulf Coast, thanks to @POTUS! Clean water, thriving beaches & our economy are safer.

Learn more: <https://castor.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=404757>

#ProtectOurCoasts ([Twitter](#))

U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor Cheers Permanent Prohibition on Oil Drilling Off Florida Gulf Coast Beaches

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor (FL-14) today applauded President Joe Biden’s decision to permanently ban offshore oil and gas drilling along Florida’s Gulf Coast. This historic action reflects the Biden-Harris Administration’s unwavering commitment to safeguarding the environment, combating the rising costs of climate change and protecting our national security, Florida’s economy and coastal communities.

“Clean water and clean beaches are central to Florida’s healthy environment, economy and way of life. Floridians voted in 2018 to prohibit oil drilling in state waters (only nine miles offshore), but oil and gas companies still had their eyes on federal waters in the eastern Gulf. I ran for Congress to champion permanent coastal protections and to keep oil drilling away from Florida, so I am thrilled that President Joe Biden answered our call to ban drilling off the Florida Gulf Coast and thereby safeguard our communities, fishing and tourism economies,” said Castor.

Castor continued, “Floridians understand the damage that oil drilling and extreme events can do to our pocketbooks and way of life. The Gulf of Mexico BP Deepwater Horizon disaster in 2010 was a wake-up call as Florida business owners suffered widespread economic losses and pollution harmed marine life. Offshore drilling is dirty and dangerous and inconsistent with the clean, tourist-friendly beaches we value in the Sunshine State. It puts our national security at risk by disrupting critical military training conducted by MacDill AFB and other military installations off Florida’s coasts. I urge my colleagues in Congress to build on this momentum and pass the bipartisan Florida Coastal Protection Act to enshrine these safeguards into law, protecting them against future administrative reversals.”

Castor has been a leading voice in protecting Florida’s coasts since elected to the Congress. After the 2010 Deepwater Horizon disaster wreaked havoc on Florida’s beaches, economy and marine life, Castor championed initiatives to secure \$10 million from BP to support marine research at institutions like the University of South Florida and Sarasota’s Mote Marine Laboratory. She also spearheaded the Gulf of Mexico Economic and Environmental Restoration Act, which laid the groundwork for long-term recovery and restoration efforts funded by BP’s penalties under the Clean Water Act. These efforts resulted in the bipartisan passage of the RESTORE Act in 2012.

Most recently, Castor partnered with Rep. Vern Buchanan (FL-16) to introduce the bipartisan Florida Coastal Protection Act, which aims to permanently ban oil drilling off Florida’s coast. Her work builds on foundational protections like the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) and the current presidential moratorium, which was set to expire in 2032. Thanks to President Biden’s decisive action, these safeguards will now be permanent, providing long-term security for Florida’s waters, marine life and coastal economies.

This decision follows years of advocacy from Rep. Castor and support from Floridians, who overwhelmingly voted in 2018 to prohibit oil drilling in state waters. Today’s announcement is a landmark achievement to protect Florida’s environment, economy, national security and way of life, and Floridians can breathe easier knowing that polluters will not be able to harm the beautiful coastal waters and communities we love.

[Rep. Carbajal’s 8-Year Push to Ban New Offshore Drilling Off Central Coast Completed as President Biden Takes Sweeping Executive Action](#)

Offshore drilling ban covers entire California Coast, including the area between the new Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary

Rep. Carbajal’s 8-Year Push to Ban New Offshore Drilling Off Central Coast Completed
President Joe Biden followed through today on Congressman Salud Carbajal’s (CA-24) request to ban future offshore drilling off the Central Coast by taking new executive action shielding over

625 million acres of federal waters from oil and gas exploration. The request was the latest push by Rep. Carbajal to enact these protections, something he has pushed for since introducing the ban as his first-ever bill in 2017.

“The Central Coast knows all too well the damage and devastation that can come from an oil spill. That’s why I made it my mission from my first bill in Congress to permanently ban offshore drilling off our coast. And with President Biden’s help today, this goal is now reality,” said Rep. Carbajal. “I deeply appreciate all the Central Coast residents and stakeholders who have spoken up during these past four years to encourage the President to follow through on this ban, which builds on his already impressive climate legacy. Together, we have passed the largest climate actions in U.S. history, shielded communities and ecosystems across our nation, and even created lasting testaments to our environment like the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary.”

In November, Congressman Carbajal was one of 12 members of Congress who wrote to President Biden requesting this action before the end of his term.

The area covered by today’s executive action covers the entire California Coast, including the federal waters between the newly-designated Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary and the existing Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. This comes after Rep. Carbajal had lobbied the White House to enact protections for areas not included in the first phase of the new marine sanctuary.

Congressman Carbajal has worked since his first day in Congress to ban future offshore drilling. Carbajal introduced that ban as his first piece of legislation – the California Clean Coast Act – in January 2017 on the anniversary of the 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill, in which 100,000 barrels of crude oil were spilled into the waters off of California's Central Coast.

Rep. Maxwell Frost

Orlando area Democratic Rep. Maxwell Frost called Biden’s decision “a huge win” for Floridians. “This is the right move on many fronts, both in terms of quality of life for the people of Florida and coastal communities across the entire country, but also as we work to shave emissions so that we can protect our planet and protect humanity,” Frost [told the Phoenix in a phone interview on Monday afternoon](#).

President Biden has taken historic action to protect over 670 million acres of our land and waters from future offshore oil and gas drilling. It's interesting to see this move, once supported by both Democrats and Republicans, now receiving mixed reactions from those who used to champion it. This long-awaited decision is a big win for Floridians, our coastal communities, and the future of our environment.

Hopefully Florida Republicans will remember the importance of protecting our water if Donald Trump comes for our coasts [\[X, 1/7/25\]](#)

Senator Adam Schiff

As of today, all future offshore drilling has been permanently banned on the West Coast.

This is long overdue. But there's still much more needed to preserve our coastline and protect our planet for generations to come.

And we will fight any attempts to undermine this ban. [[X, 1.6.25](#)]

Congresswoman Jasmine Crockett

Thank you President Biden for acting to PERMANENTLY protect coastlines from Maine to Florida & Washington to California from offshore drilling. With natural disasters increasing, we need to invest in clean, sustainable energy - cutting our energy bills and protecting the planet! [[X, 1/6/25](#)]

Senator Jack Reed

I applaud President Biden's move to protect America's coastline & oceans from offshore oil and natural gas drilling, defending our environment & growing our blue economy by boosting ocean health & bolstering coastal resiliency. [[X, 1/6/25](#)]

Senator Jeanne Shaheen

I'm thrilled to see @POTUS move to protect New Hampshire's seacoast from the harmful economic and environmental impacts of offshore drilling. Today's action will help safeguard the homes, businesses and wildlife that live along our beloved seacoast for generations. [[X, 1/6/25](#)]

Senator Patty Murray

.@POTUS protecting the Pacific coast & other areas from offshore drilling is an important step to protect WA state's coastal communities & our environment.

I have & will always fight to protect our oceans & stop GOP efforts to put Big Oil profits before people & our planet. [[X, 1/6/25](#)]

[Senator Rick Scott](#)

"I don't believe we ought to be doing drilling in the Gulf, probably the most important reason is it's the biggest training zone for our military, I think in the country," Scott told POLITICO's E&E News. "So I think it's very important to preserve that area for training."

Rep. Nydia Velazquez

“Glad to see @POTUS take bold action to protect our oceans and communities on the coast from offshore drilling. I’m proud to have joined my colleagues last year in calling for this step. This is a huge win for our environment, economy, and future generations.” [\[X, 1/6/2024\]](#)

Rep. Chellie Pingree

“UPDATE: Following our letter, @POTUS is taking action to protect more than 625 million acres of American waters from future offshore oil and natural-gas drilling, including the entire East Coast! // The risks of offshore drilling—to local communities and economies, to marine ecosystems, and to human health—far outweigh the potential benefits. No president has protected more American lands+waters than President Biden. It’s a legacy that he—and all of us—should be proud of 🙌” [\[X, 1/6/2025\]](#)

Rep. Don Beyer

I have long opposed offshore drilling off the Virginia coast, which is a threat to our environment and the recreation and tourism economies which depend on it. Glad to see this step to protect Virginia’s coastal communities. [\[X, 1/8/25\]](#)

Governors and State Officials

[Governor Newsom issues statement on President Biden’s action to protect Pacific Coast](#)

SACRAMENTO – Governor Gavin Newsom today issued the following statement after President Biden took action to protect the Pacific and Atlantic coasts from offshore oil and gas drilling.

Hundreds of miles of California’s iconic coastline is now fully protected from expanded offshore drilling, thanks to today’s action by President Biden. For decades, we have led the fight to protect the Pacific Coast and the millions of Californians who call these coastal communities home.

We thank the Biden-Harris Administration for taking this bold action that will pay dividends for generations to come. New offshore drilling has no place in California, and the President’s action strengthens our work to protect the coast.

[Governor Josh Stein \(NC\)](#)

Gov. Josh Stein, who opposed offshore drilling and seismic exploration while attorney general, praised Biden’s actions Monday. “North Carolina is home to beautiful beaches that help drive

our state's economy and bring our people joy. We cannot tolerate oil spills damaging the Outer Banks and our other barrier islands. I commend President Biden for protecting our coast and its economy," Stein wrote.

[Wade Crowfoot](#) (CA Secretary for Natural Resources)

Big coastal protections by @POTUS will safeguard 1,100 miles of California coastline!

"New offshore drilling has no place in California, and this action strengthens our work to protect the coast." -- @GavinNewsom

Local Elected Officials

Mayor of St. Augustine

"Like all coastal towns, St. Augustine is dependent on a thriving marine environment and the protection of our coastal waters is critical to the health of our fishing industry and tourist economy. Today we join many other coastal towns in a sigh of relief for the permanent protection from the potentially devastating effects of oil drilling" said Mayor Nancy Sikes-Kline, City of St. Augustine.

Mayor of Broward County

"On behalf of Broward County, we are beyond grateful for President Biden's decision to protect and preserve our shorelines. His administration has provided a blueprint for both sustainability and self-sufficiency, without sacrificing our most beautiful natural resources." Mayor Beam Furr, Broward County, FL

[Wilmington City Councilman and Republican Charlie Rivenbark](#)

"I would still be opposed to offshore drilling anywhere, particularly along the North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia coasts, and I'm glad President Biden's doing this on his way out," Rivenbark said Monday morning. "This to me is almost a nonpartisan issue. I grew up on the coast. I know the other side has got terrific arguments and reasons why, but I just can't take a chance at an oil spill."

National Organizations

Sierra Club | [Sierra Club Statement on New Federal Protections for U.S. Oceans](#)

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the White House announced new protections for millions of acres of U.S. ocean from all future oil and gas leasing. The memorandum withdraws 625 million acres from leasing, including the entire eastern Atlantic coast; the eastern Gulf of Mexico; the U.S. Pacific coast of California, Oregon, and Washington; and portions of the Northern Bering Sea in Alaska. These new protections will safeguard coastal communities and economies, marine wildlife, and ecosystems from the threats posed by offshore drilling.

Biden's authority to make the withdrawals comes from Section 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act. Presidents of both parties, including every president in the 21st century, has utilized this power to remove portions of the U.S. coastline from oil and gas drilling.

Offshore drilling is hazardous and poses significant threats to communities and wildlife from oil spills, contaminated water, and polluted air due to the construction and operation of drilling operations. The 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, the worst maritime oil disaster in history, released 4 million barrels of crude oil into the ocean resulting in \$8.8 billion in natural resource damages.

In response, Sierra Club Executive Director Ben Jealous, released the following statement:

“This critical action is a major win for coastal communities, marine wildlife, and our collective future. In using the power of the presidency, the same authority used by his three immediate predecessors, President Biden is acting to safeguard the public health of coastal communities from the dangers of offshore drilling along with the marine wildlife that live in these waters. There will never be a safe way to desecrate our waters. As long as it is allowed to continue, offshore drilling and the pollution it causes will continue to present a threat to coastal communities, economies, and environments. We must continue to work to achieve a clean energy transition that ends our reliance on fossil fuels, grows the strong economy it has already built with family-sustaining jobs and preserves our clean water and clean air.

“The Sierra Club applauds President Biden for his leadership and further cementing his historic legacy of prioritizing our health, our collective future, and public lands and waters.”

Surfrider | [Surfrider Applauds the Biden Administration for Protecting U.S. Coasts From New Offshore Oil Drilling](#)

Surfrider celebrates President Biden's historic action to permanently withdraw the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, Eastern Gulf of Mexico, and parts of the Northern Bering Sea from future offshore drilling.

On January 6, President Biden announced the withdrawal of the entire U.S. East Coast, the eastern Gulf of Mexico, the Pacific off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California, and additional portions of the Northern Bering Sea in Alaska from future oil and gas leasing. The President's historic action, taken under the authority of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, permanently protects more than 625 million acres of U.S. waters from any future oil and gas development in 5-year offshore drilling plans developed by the federal government. It also helps fulfill a commitment made by President Biden during the 2020 campaign to end new offshore oil and gas leasing.

"The Surfrider Foundation applauds the Biden administration for withdrawing these waters from future oil and gas leasing. Offshore drilling is a dirty and damaging practice that harms our ocean as well as communities and businesses, while worsening climate change. The President's historic action is a key step toward ending oil and gas drilling in U.S. waters. We call on our federal leaders to take further steps to ensure that all U.S. coasts are protected from this harmful industry," said Dr. Chad Nelsen, CEO of the Surfrider Foundation.

OCS_Withdraw_Biden_Lower48

Offshore drilling causes grave impacts through every phase of the process — from exploratory seismic blasting that harms marine life to the inevitable oil spills that damage the environment and communities. Offshore drilling also causes enormous harm on land through oil refineries that release toxic pollutants, such as carbon monoxide and sulfur dioxide, and which disproportionately impact lower-income and communities of color. Finally, offshore drilling is an existential threat to coastal recreation and tourism, which is enjoyed by millions of Americans and generates billions of dollars in economic revenue every year.

The economic reality is that coastal tourism and recreation generate \$160 billion annually and support 2.5 million American jobs – far outweighing offshore oil and gas production, which contributes \$96 billion and only 12,000 jobs nationally. As a net oil exporter since 2020, with 1.64 million barrels per day in exports in 2023, the United States is already energy independent. We have the technology to transition to clean energy; we just need the political will to implement solutions that will provide a cleaner, safer, and more secure future.

Offshore oil drilling worsens the effects of climate change as our nation and world struggle to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The extreme weather events of this past year are just the latest reminder that we face a future of increasing heat, hurricanes, floods, droughts, wildfires, rising seas, and ocean acidification unless we take bold steps to end the burning of fossil fuels.

President Biden's action will prevent additional carbon pollution from entering the atmosphere and is undoubtedly necessary if the U.S. is to achieve its goal of net-zero emissions by 2050, as part of global efforts to address climate change.

Offshore drilling is highly unpopular across the country with members of both major political parties opposed to expanded oil and gas development off our coasts. More than 390 communities, nearly 55,000 businesses, and 500,000 fishing families across the U.S. are on the record in opposition to oil and gas drilling in their waters. Further, a poll released by Oceana revealed that two-thirds of American voters (64%) support their elected officials protecting U.S. coastlines from new offshore drilling, with similar support among registered voters in coastal states (66%). The poll also found this support grew among youth voters 18 to 29 years of age (70%).

The executive authority to protect public waters from new offshore drilling under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) has been used on a bipartisan basis by every president this century, including both President Obama and President Trump. Presidential withdrawals under OCSLA are durable because, once created, only Congress has the power to revoke them. The law authorizes presidents to withdraw areas from oil and gas leasing but does not authorize future presidents to undo withdrawals.

Surfrider has a long and proud history of defending our coasts from new offshore drilling. For decades, our chapters have fought to stop oil and gas development in the Atlantic, Pacific, Gulf of Mexico, and Alaska. In 2017, we helped defeat a proposal by the Obama administration to allow drilling off the Mid- and South Atlantic coasts. Four years later, our advocacy compelled the Trump administration to abandon plans for new drilling in over 90% of U.S. waters. These successes have been fueled by the inspired activism of our grassroots network and growing opposition from communities, businesses, Tribes, and the public.

President Biden's action is a major step towards ending offshore drilling in the U.S., but our work is far from done. While we are celebrating the protections announced today, communities in the central and western Gulf of Mexico live day to day with the impacts of oil and gas drilling and were left out of these protections. In fact, 97% of federal offshore oil and gas drilling occurs in the Gulf of Mexico. Communities living near offshore oil and gas operations in the Gulf are forced to live with dangerous pollution, extreme storms, and all the impacts of extracting and consuming fossil fuels. Gulf communities cannot be a sacrifice zone and must be protected from oil and gas drilling.

Surfrider Foundation expresses our heartfelt gratitude to key coalition partners, including Oceana, Sierra Club, Earthjustice, Healthy Gulf, America the Beautiful for All, Surf Industry Members Association, regional business alliances, and others for their collaboration. We also wish to thank all the communities, businesses, Tribes, and members of the public who have fought tirelessly for years, and in some cases, decades, to protect our coasts from new oil and gas development. Your efforts are an inspiration and a testament to the power of civic engagement!

Oceana | [President Biden Builds on Bipartisan Tradition by Protecting U.S. Coastlines from Offshore Drilling](#)

President Biden permanently protected the East Coast, West Coast, and eastern Gulf of Mexico, and areas off Alaska, from offshore oil and gas drilling today. These coastlines are now off limits to offshore drilling, including the coasts from Washington to California and Maine to Florida.

The business community, defense advocacy groups, and the public have called for these areas to be permanently protected.

Oceana Campaign Director Joseph Gordon released the following statement in response to President Biden's announcement:

"This is an epic ocean victory! Thank you, President Biden, for listening to the voices from coastal communities and contributing to the bipartisan tradition of protecting our coasts. Americans have been calling for these protections for decades, and Oceana applauds President Biden for building on the legacy of Democratic and Republican presidents protecting our coasts from offshore drilling. Our coastlines are home to millions of Americans and support billions of dollars of economic activity that depend on a clean coast, abundant wildlife, and thriving fisheries. President Biden's new protections add to this bipartisan history, including President Trump's previous withdrawals in the southeastern United States in 2020. Our treasured coastal communities are now safeguarded for future generations."

President Biden used his authority under Section 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, which allows him to withdraw any unleased areas of the Outer Continental Shelf from future offshore drilling. Previous presidents from both parties have used this authority to withdraw large areas from oil and gas leasing. In 2020, President Trump protected North Carolina through Florida for ten years, but the protections were set to expire in 2032. President Biden's announcement now permanently protects these areas.

For more information on Oceana's efforts to prevent the expansion of offshore drilling, please [click here](#).

Background

A poll released by Oceana in July 2024 revealed that two-thirds of American voters (64%) support their elected officials protecting U.S. coastlines from new offshore drilling, with similar support among registered voters in coastal states (66%). The poll also found this support grew among youth voters 18 to 29 years of age (70%).

A 2021 analysis by Oceana found that ending new leasing could prevent more than \$720 billion in damage to people, property, and the environment. The oil industry currently holds more than

2,000 leases, according to a 2023 Oceana report, with 75% of that ocean acreage currently unused.

For more information about Oceana's campaign to prevent the expansion of offshore drilling in the United States, please [click here](#).

Earthjustice | [Earthjustice Applauds White House Withdrawal of American Offshore Territory from Future Oil-and-Gas Development](#)

Washington, D.C. — President Biden invoked his authority under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) to withdraw vulnerable areas of the ocean from future oil-and-gas leasing. The withdrawals include 625 million acres of public waters off the Atlantic, Pacific, Alaska, and Gulf coasts — including an area in the Eastern Gulf that President Trump temporarily withdrew until 2032 under the same authority, and that Congress had temporarily protected with the passage of the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006.

“President Biden just made a powerful investment in the resiliency of communities, regional economies, and marine wildlife across the coastal United States,” said Earthjustice Vice President of Litigation for Lands, Wildlife, and Oceans Drew Caputo. “These protective policies will ensure safer conditions and more room for prosperity for millions of people living along American coasts, for thousands of businesses that rely on undisturbed oceans, and for vulnerable wildlife. Our work ahead is clear: we’ll continue the fight to ensure that Gulf communities in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama can also increasingly live without the threat from offshore drilling on their front doorstep.”

President Biden withdrew the offshore territory under Section 12(a) of OCSLA, a provision with a long history of use by eight Presidents over 73 years, including Presidents Trump, Obama, and George W. Bush. Under OCSLA, development of the outer continental shelf is subject to environmental safeguards and must be managed in a way that balances harm to the marine, coastal, and human environments. Section 12(a) helps accomplish this by allowing the President to withdraw portions of the outer continental shelf from mineral leasing, including leasing to drill for oil and gas, recognizing that some areas are just too risky or too sensitive to drill.

The withdrawn areas include: The entire eastern U.S. Atlantic coast and the Eastern Gulf of Mexico, or approximately 334 million acres of the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) from Canada to the southern tip of Florida, and the Eastern Gulf of Mexico; nearly 250 million acres of Federal waters off the West Coast of the mainland U.S.; and 44 million acres of the Northern Bering Sea in far northwest Alaska.

Last year, nearly 200 organizations from around the country signed a letter calling on President Biden to safeguard endangered marine mammals, valuable fisheries, important habitats, and

vulnerable coastal communities who depend on clean waters for their economies. Members of Congress also called on the White House to protect coastal waters from offshore drilling, citing the economic and ecological importance of protecting these waters.

[LCV Statement on New Protections for 625 Million Acres of U.S. Waters](#)

Washington, D.C.— In response to the Biden Administration announcing protections off the coasts of the Atlantic, Pacific, Eastern Gulf of Mexico, and Alaska’s Northern Bering Sea by withdrawing 625 million acres of offshore waters from future oil and gas leasing, the League of Conservation Voters (LCV) released the following statement from Senior Vice President of Government Affairs, Tiernan Sittenfeld:

“We applaud the Biden administration for protecting the coasts off the Pacific, Atlantic, the eastern Gulf of Mexico and portions of the Northern Bering Sea off Alaska from new offshore oil and gas leasing. Preventing the expansion of future oil development off our coasts will help meet our climate goals and safeguard communities. With today’s announcement, President Biden has protected more of our lands and waters than any other U.S. president in history, more than 670 million acres of lands, waters, and oceans across the country. We are forever grateful to President Biden for his steadfast commitment and unparalleled leadership in protecting our communities, our health, our climate, and our treasured places.”

[Greenpeace USA Welcomes Biden Administration’s Ocean Protections](#)

Washington, D.C. (January 7, 2025)—In response to the Biden-Harris Administration’s decision yesterday to protect public waters from new offshore oil and gas drilling by withdrawing more than 625 million acres in areas of the Atlantic, Eastern Gulf, Pacific, and Northern Bering Sea from future leasing, John Hocevar, Greenpeace USA’s Oceans Campaign Director, said:

“Greenpeace USA commends President Biden for taking decisive action to permanently protect these areas, which play a vital role in sustaining life, combating climate change and supporting the livelihoods of coastal communities. As coral reefs and Arctic sea ice disappear in rapidly heating oceans and millions of Americans suffer from climate-fueled storms, droughts, fires, and floods each year, halting any new offshore drilling is the kind of science-driven step needed right now. We have learned the hard way that when we allow oil drilling, we will have spills, often with catastrophic consequences. This is an important step toward consigning the harmful and short-sighted practice to the annals of history. The good news is that the shift to wind and solar is well underway, with significant cost savings and environmental benefits. We will continue standing with workers and communities to protect the oceans and these hard-fought wins that ensure a better future for all of us, no matter which party is in power.”

Contact: Tanya Brooks, Senior Communications Specialist at Greenpeace USA
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Greenpeace USA is part of a global network of independent campaigning organizations that use peaceful protest and creative communication to expose global environmental problems and promote solutions that are essential to a green and peaceful future. Greenpeace USA is committed to transforming the country's unjust social, environmental, and economic systems from the ground up to address the climate crisis, advance racial justice, and build an economy that puts people first. Learn more at www.greenpeace.org/usa.

[Natural Resources Defense Council](#)

"By not allowing these public waters to be sold off to the highest corporate bidder, President Biden has put people and nature over polluters. Offshore drilling causes immense harm to coastal communities, pollute the ocean, and harm wildlife," said Manish Bapna, president and CEO of NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council). "History has unfortunately taught us that oil and gas drilling in the ocean inherently risks catastrophe. President Biden's leasing withdrawal helps limit this risk and prevents oil and gas companies from lining their pockets at the public's expense."

GreenLatinos

"GreenLatinos celebrates President Biden's bold action to protect over 625 million acres of U.S. ocean waters from offshore drilling, prioritizing the health of marine ecosystems, coastal economies, and communities," said Dr. Val Z. Schüll, Water Equity and Ocean Program Director at GreenLatinos. "This historic decision safeguards vital habitats, prevents oil spills, protects public health, and supports the livelihoods of millions. It also marks a critical step in addressing climate change by reducing our reliance on fossil fuels, cutting carbon emissions, and promoting a just transition to clean energy solutions. For far too long, frontline communities have dealt with disproportionate environmental injustices due to the country's reliance on fossil fuels. With roughly half of Latinos in the United States residing in coastal counties, this action will provide much needed public and environmental health benefits to our comunidad."

Surf Industry Members Association

"The Surf Industry Members Association applauds the federal administration for permanently protecting the Atlantic, Pacific, Eastern Gulf, and Bering Sea from new offshore oil drilling. Our businesses and entire industry rely on and profit from clean beaches and safe ocean waters for surfing, diving, fishing, boating and other outdoor activities," said Vipe Desai, Executive Director of the Surf Industry Members Association.

Monterey Bay Aquarium

"This is one of the most important steps that can be taken to protect our ocean and our coastal

communities,” said Monterey Bay Aquarium Executive Director Julie Packard. “We have learned devastating lessons from the impacts of offshore oil development off of California, in the Gulf, and elsewhere. We know that the foundation of thriving coastal communities and their economies is a healthy, vibrant ocean. Thanks to this decisive action, these communities no longer need to bear the threat of offshore drilling.”

“We’re grateful to President Biden and Vice President Harris,” Packard continued. “Their action will unlock a better future for coastal communities and economies, tourism, sustainable fisheries, and wildlife. This will benefit Americans, and our ocean, for decades to come.”

Shedd Aquarium

“A profound and purposeful step towards a brighter, blue futures, Shedd Aquarium commends the decision from the Biden-Harris Administration to protect over 625 million acres of U.S. coastlines and coastal communities from the known harms of offshore oil and gas development. Time and time again, the science tells us that hope for a healthier tomorrow lies beneath the surface of our planet’s aquatic environments. These sweeping safeguards will ensure both people and wildlife have the protections and support that nature provides in the face of a rapidly changing climate.” – Dr. Bridget Coughlin, president and CEO of Shedd Aquarium

Center For American Progress

“The Biden administration is answering the call to protect the ocean and the people living along its coast from the dangers of offshore drilling. We applaud this decision to safeguard the coastal communities and economies of the East Coast, Eastern Gulf of Mexico, West Coast, and Alaska, putting people ahead of the whims of special interests. Shoreline communities deserve to live free from the specter of oil spills and air pollution and this action accomplishes that mission for millions of Americans. From subsistence communities, to a healthy fishing economy and a booming tourism industry, this decision supports more prosperous coastlines and a greener future for all Americans,” Jenny Rowland-Shea, Director for Public Lands at Center for American Progress.

Defenders of Wildlife

"The Biden administration has made a timely decision to protect public waters, in line with the demands of Americans — especially those living along our coasts," said Sierra Weaver, Senior Attorney for Defenders of Wildlife. "This decision protects endangered species, seafood resources, and so much more aquatic life, rather than offering up our natural heritage to corporate interests. It's not only a smart choice, but the clear choice."

Aquarium Conservation Partnership

"Aquariums across the country applaud President Biden's historic action to protect nearly a quarter of U.S. waters from offshore oil and gas drilling," said Kim McIntyre, Executive

Director of the Aquarium Conservation Partnership. "Our coastal communities, economic future, and national heritage depend on clean, vibrant, and healthy coastlines and ocean ecosystems. ACP members are proud to showcase the living treasures of our nation's ocean and coast in our aquariums, and to inspire stewardship of these irreplaceable national assets."

"Aquarium Conservation Partnership (ACP) members work with communities they are located in on critical matters that impact our lands, waterways, freshwater ecosystems, and ocean," said Ayana Melvan, Senior Director of Conservation Action for Aquarium Conservation Partnership. "The work takes all of us," Melvan continued. "President Biden's action to protect our waters from offshore oil and gas drilling supports our collective movement toward Environmental and Ocean Justice."

Ocean Defense Initiative

"President Biden has continued a strong bipartisan tradition to protect our coasts with decisive action to stop new offshore drilling in areas of our ocean," said Sarah Guy, Executive Director of Ocean Defense Initiative. "These protections help the coastal communities, economies, and marine life that depend on a healthy ocean to thrive. We thank the Administration for this action and commit to working toward a future where every coast nationwide is free from the risks and negative impacts of offshore drilling, reaping the benefits of a healthy ocean for generations to come."

Ocean Foundation

"Done in response to bipartisan support, actions like this have been successfully used by presidents of both parties to protect the use of essential U.S. military facilities or to preserve sustainable local coastal economies," said Richard Charter, Senior Fellow with The Ocean Foundation. "We applaud today's visionary step to prevent the next Deepwater Horizon."

Next 100 Coalition

"The Next 100 Coalition applauds this historic decision from President Biden to prevent oil and gas drilling across over 600 million acres of federal waters. This effort will help to prevent harmful drilling and the further degradation of ecosystems that are crucial to preserve marine life, cultural practices, the livelihoods, and food security. This is one of many decisions that will add to President Biden's legacy to protecting the environment," said Karyn Bigelow, Director of Programs & Advocacy with the Next 100 Coalition.

National Aquarium

"Offshore oil and gas drilling threatens coastal communities and endangers whales, sea turtles and other wildlife that Americans treasure," **said National Aquarium President and CEO John Racanelli.** "Protecting these sensitive areas from future offshore oil exploration and extraction by placing limits on future development is smart public policy that's science-based, protects

public health and safeguards marine ecosystems. All of us—human and non—rely on a healthy ocean for our survival. This is the right thing to do.”

Healthy Ocean Coalition

“Today’s withdrawals show that President Biden and his administration are listening to the wishes of communities around the country who want to protect their citizens, coasts, and economies from the destructive legacy of offshore oil and gas drilling and spilling”, said Sarah Winter Whelan, Executive Director of the Healthy Ocean Coalition. “As a coalition of over 300 diverse community groups and citizens, we applaud today’s action by President Biden to solidify long term protections for both communities and vital marine ecosystems.”

Climate Action Campaign

“For much too long, our coastal communities have suffered economic and ecological damage from oil spills, and endured devastating hurricanes, sea level rise, and coastal erosion due to climate change caused by fossil fuel pollution. The Biden administration’s sweeping decision to protect our nation’s waters from future drilling is an unambiguous win for coastal communities, their economies and ecosystems. The decision bolsters our national security and will ultimately reduce the climate pollution that is ravaging the coasts, the nation, and the world,” said Margie Alt, Director of the Climate Action Campaign. “President Biden has been a steadfast champion for climate progress from Day One of his administration. His legacy of conservation and advocacy to protect our climate will leave an indelible mark on the health of our communities and our environment.”

Creation Justice Ministries

"The waters off our coasts are sacred places - sites of Indigenous wisdom, ecological abundance, and spiritual connection. President Biden's protection of over 625 million acres from offshore drilling honors this sacredness while advancing environmental justice," said Avery Davis Lamb, Executive Director of Creation Justice Ministries. "Like the waters of baptism that sustain and renew us, healthy oceans sustain coastal communities and marine ecosystems. This decision reflects a moral commitment to protecting both vulnerable communities and God's creation. At Creation Justice Ministries, we see this as a vital step toward climate justice, ecological flourishing, and healed relationships with all of creation."

American Bird Conservancy

“Birds are frequent victims of oil spills. Drilling activities also negatively impact their habitats,” **said American Bird Conservancy Vice President of Policy, Steve Holmer.** “American Bird Conservancy celebrates the protection of millions of acres across ocean and coastal regions. This action helps reduce climate threats and safeguards birdlife.”

Friends of the Earth

"We are beyond pleased to see President Biden take protective action to shield these OCS regions from offshore drilling. As Trump readies to erase climate progress and dish unfettered handouts to Big Oil, permanently safeguarding our oceans and coastal communities is especially timely. We will continue fighting inside and outside the courtroom for a more healthy and just world free from dangerous fossil fuels," **said Hallie Templeton, legal director for Friends of the Earth.**

Sachamama

"We applaud the Biden administration's bold decision to safeguard over 625 million acres of public waters from offshore oil and gas drilling. This action preserves our precious marine ecosystems and ensures that future generations of Latinos and all Americans can continue to rely on these waters for their livelihoods, culture, and way of life." Carlos Zegarra, Executive Director, Sachamama.

Waterkeeper Alliance

"We welcome this commonsense action taken to protect our oceans, along with the communities and economies that depend on them. Offshore drilling harms critical marine ecosystems and devastates local fishermen and families, whose livelihoods and public health are directly impacted by destructive industry pollution and environmental degradation. With climate change-driven disasters only becoming more frequent, this action could not have come at a more crucial time as we continue the push to transition away from fossil fuels in favor of cleaner, renewable energy sources that protect our economies, the environment, and the most at-risk communities," **said Marc Yaggi, CEO of Waterkeeper Alliance.**

Azul

"We applaud President Biden for using his authority under Section 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) to permanently protect more than 625 million acres of federal waters from fossil fuel development," said Marce Gutiérrez-Graudiņš, Founder and Executive Director of Azul. "Offshore drilling poses significant risks to coastal communities, public health, and ecosystems while expanding fossil fuel extraction undermines climate goals. The 2024 National Azul poll found that across political ideologies, Latino voters support action to ban offshore drilling and are even willing to pay more out of pocket to make it happen. This overwhelming public support provides an opportunity for incoming administrations to continue strengthening these provisions. The urgent need to mitigate climate change transcends political leadership. We thank President Biden for taking this significant and bold step to protect our ocean and solidify his climate legacy."

Evergreen Action

“Today, President Biden took a critical step to safeguard our climate future by protecting our waters from offshore drilling—a resounding win for frontline communities and our climate. By ending these unpopular giveaways to Big Oil, President Biden is aligning federal policy with the urgent need to reject dangerous fossil fuel projects and protect our oceans and coastal communities from destructive drilling,” said **Lena Moffitt, Executive Director of Evergreen Action**. “Americans on both sides of the aisle support protecting our oceans from Big Oil giveaways. President Biden’s bold action today underscores that we cannot afford the continued expansion of oil and gas production if we are to meet our climate targets and avoid the worst impacts of the climate crisis. It also ensures that vital public waters can no longer be exploited for corporate polluters’ profits, leaving frontline communities to shoulder the costs of cleanup and endure toxic pollution. As we enter an uncertain political era, this move solidifies progress toward a cleaner, safer climate future for all Americans.”

Blue Frontier

“Since the 1969 Santa Barbara Oil Spill and in the wake of the 2010 BP Deepwater Horizon disaster, coastal citizens have demanded we ‘Get Oil Out,’ battling offshore drilling in countless non-partisan campaigns to protect the health of our Ocean and coastal economies. President Biden’s decision to permanently ban offshore oil and gas drilling off the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, the eastern Gulf of Mexico and northern Bering Sea (in consultation with Alaska Native communities) is deeply appreciated,” said **David Helvarg, Executive Director of Blue Frontier**. “Not only will this protect us from the dangerous impacts of drilling and spilling that have been a constant of offshore operations since late in the 19th century but, following the two hottest years in recorded history, it’s an important next step in the needed transition from fossil to clean energy. President Biden’s legacy will now include protecting the blue in our red, white and blue.”

National Ocean Protection Coalition.

“President Biden’s heroic action protects American coastlines, local economies, and marine life from preventable damage,” said **Amy Kenney, Executive Director of the National Ocean Protection Coalition**. “This withdrawal continues a bipartisan practice to use executive authority to safeguard coastal communities. All life on Earth depends on a healthy ocean, and setting reasonable boundaries on destructive extraction practices will ensure generations to come can continue to enjoy nature and rely on the ocean to sustain them.”

Climate Power

[Climate Power executive director Lori Lodes issued the following statement:](#)

“The Biden administration’s decision to protect our oceans will preserve the health and safety of coastal communities. While Americans strongly support protections for our air and water and

keeping our public lands pristine, Donald Trump has a record of putting the profits of oil and gas executives ahead of our public health. President Biden has delivered on his promises to protect our public land and water for future generations; Donald Trump should do the same.”

Futureswell

“This is what we’ve fought for,” says Carissa Cabrera, Founder of Futureswell, an international youth collective advocating for ocean conservation progress. “Offshore oil and gas drilling threatens the health and wellbeing of coastal communities and future generations, and we are grateful to the Biden Administration for their historic leadership in establishing permanent protections to millions of acres of ocean. Our work continues as we call on leaders to divest from harmful and unjust sources of energy that threaten future generations.”

Ocean Alliance North America

“Young people unequivocally rebuff the continuation and expansion of fossil fuels. Activities like offshore drilling are why generations like mine are growing up all-too-aware of the impacts of the climate crisis. We express our deep thanks to the Biden-Harris Administration for protecting our future through this historic withdrawal for offshore oil and gas development,” said **Mark Haver, Sustainable Ocean Alliance North America Regional Representative and Policy Advisor**. “In the Global Blue New Deal, a youth-led ocean-climate policy framework, endorsed by thousands of young people, our very first demand is to end offshore drilling and divest from fossil fuels. In the Global Youth Statement for COP29, young people demanded an immediate end to fossil fuel expansion and proliferation. This decision by President Biden is supported by millions of young people, and this is the leadership we need from global leaders urgently.”

Ocean Conservancy

“Today we are one step closer to securing a clean ocean energy future and we thank President Biden for taking this critical action to protect areas of our ocean from oil and gas drilling and exploration,” said **Ocean Conservancy’s Senior Director of Climate Policy Anna-Marie Laura**. “Oil and gas development has wreaked havoc on our ocean through daily leaks, massive spills and extreme air and water pollution. We must, and can, end offshore oil and gas production and move toward responsible, renewable energy sources – like offshore wind – to protect our ocean, while remaining aligned with our goals for American energy security and independence. Protecting these areas under Section 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act enjoys support across the aisle as well as up and down our country’s coastlines. The President has responded to calls from coastal towns, communities, tribal leaders, and countless others who depend on a clean, healthy ocean, and we are grateful for his leadership.”

A Jewish Call to Climate Action

“Americans know that the things we value most – our families, communities, homes, and sacred places – are at risk because of the extraction and burning of fossil fuels. This decision to prevent more and egregiously unnecessary offshore drilling is a crucial step toward realizing a clean energy future,” says **Rabbi Jennie Rosenn, Founder & CEO of Dayenu: A Jewish Call to Climate Action**. “We must work to build a sukkat shalom, a shelter of peace and safety, a world that is no longer threatened by climate catastrophe and that is livable and sustainable for all people, for generations to come. Our future lies in readily available, abundant, and affordable clean energy that delivers clean air to breathe and water to drink.”

National Religious Partnership for the Environment

“As people of faith we are called to care for human health and the wellbeing of all of God’s creation,” said **Cassandra Carmichael, Executive Director of the National Religious Partnership for the Environment**. “Coastal communities depend on oil-free beaches. The decision to curtail new offshore drilling in God’s ocean, which includes the Atlantic, Pacific, North Bering Sea and parts of the Gulf of Mexico, will protect coastal communities and marine life, leading to a more healthy and vibrant marine and coastal ecosystems.”

Executive Director of Save Our Shores

“We applaud Biden’s announcement to protect federal waters from offshore drilling,” said **Katie Thompson, Executive Director of Save Our Shores**. “We thank the administration for listening to generations of Indigenous peoples, coastal communities, and local governments who have been fighting for this protection. The message is clear—our vital coastal habitats and thriving ocean economy will not be jeopardized by the great risks of offshore oil development. We look forward to working with others to uphold Biden’s legacy.”

Urban Ocean Lab

“Urban Ocean Lab celebrates the announcement by President Biden, barring new offshore oil and gas development along the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, and in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico and the Northern Bering Sea. Climate driven sea level rise, storms, and temperature increases are wreaking havoc on coastal cities and ecosystems. It is urgent that the United States move quickly away from its reliance on fossil fuels and toward a clean energy economy to stem the tide of climate impacts. The President’s announcement is a strong signal of our intentions as a nation to phase out drilling and invest in justly-sourced renewable energy sources that will support and protect coastal communities and ecosystems,” said **Alexandra Carter, Policy Director, Urban Ocean Lab**.

Hispanic Access Foundation

“Hispanic Access Foundation is grateful to President Biden for using his authority under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to permanently protect 625 million acres of the U.S. ocean from all future oil and gas drilling. Withdrawing these areas from drilling is a huge win for the environment as well as coastal communities, including many Latino communities”, said Maite Arce, President & CEO. “In response to bipartisan efforts, this historic action will ensure the contamination associated with fossil fuels is eliminated, contributing positively towards public health and climate mitigation goals. Healthy and clean ocean ecosystems are vital for all life on Earth and we applaud the Biden administration for this action that will benefit future generations.”

Next Gen America

“In protecting 625 million+ acres of the U.S. ocean from offshore drilling, President Biden has determined that the environmental and economic risks and harms that would result from drilling in these areas outweigh their limited fossil fuel resource potential.

He is right!” Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez, said in a [post](#).

Waterspirit

“This victory is a testament to the tireless work of so many individuals and communities who have raised their voices for the protection of our ocean,” said Rachel Dawn Davis, Waterspirit’s Public Policy & Justice Organizer. “We have witnessed firsthand the resilience of the human spirit when united with nature, and today, we honor that spirit. This ban represents not just a political win, but a spiritual commitment to preserving the Earth for future generations.”

International, Regional, State, Local, and Tribal Organizations

Healthy Gulf

“We are grateful President Biden has taken action to protect the eastern Gulf of Mexico, preserving this vital region from the harms of drilling. This decision reflects the strong opposition of Floridians and others to industrializing and polluting our waters. Still, much remains to be done to shield the entire Gulf from offshore drilling and bring about a just transition to clean energy,” said Martha Collins, Healthy Gulf Executive Director.

“Decades of Floridians wanting their coastlines to be protected, remain pristine as possible, not have the sight of offshore drilling, even visible from our coastline like it is in other states,

continuing to protect all of our natural resources,” Stephannie Kettle [said](#). “It’s extremely important for us to continue to have these long-term protections.”

[Center for Environmental Law at Tulane University](#)

“President Biden is drawing the line and saying, if you will, that the era of uncertainty is over and I’m closing the door to exploration and production in these areas,” Mark S. Davis, director of the Center for Environmental Law at Tulane University in New Orleans.

Business Alliance for Protecting the Atlantic Coast

“It was welcome news over four years ago when President Trump announced a 10-year moratorium on drilling off the southern coastal states of Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina and as welcome as that news was then we also knew it wasn’t enough,” said Sandra Bundy, President of the Business Alliance for Protecting the Atlantic Coast.

Business Alliance for Protecting the Pacific Coast

“The Business Alliance for Protecting the Atlantic Coast has always had our sights set on permanent protection of the eastern seaboard, where coastal businesses and tourism-based economies remained at risk. We are thrilled and thankful to learn this goal is going to be realized. Opening all federal waters to offshore exploration and drilling posed serious threats to coastal economies and ecosystems that are critical to millions along the coast. Cities and towns large and small oppose the industrialization of the Atlantic and are increasingly seeing stronger storms and flooding and face serious threats from rising sea levels. Those threats would increase in magnitude if offshore drilling was added to the mix. President Biden is leaving us all with a legacy of protecting the Atlantic coast for generations to come. This would not have been possible without years of dedicated efforts from business, fishing communities and countless others who used their voices to garner bipartisan support from Governors and Legislators in coastal states and beyond.”

“The Pacific west coast economy provides over \$80 Billion in GDP via industries like tourism, outdoor recreation, fishing, retail, and real estate, supporting more than 825,000 jobs. And BAPPC’s 8,100 business members rely on a clean ocean to drive their revenues and provide for their customers, employees and families. We applaud the Biden administration for using their authority via the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act and protecting our businesses by prioritizing a healthy coastal ecosystem,” said **Grant Bixby, Founding Member of the Business Alliance for Protecting the Pacific Coast.**

Association of Village Council Presidents

“Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) would like to express our sincere gratitude to President Biden’s commitment to protecting our food security and marine environment by limiting oil and gas leasing in vulnerable areas. AVCP has opposed offshore oil and gas drilling

in the Northern Bering Sea since the early 1980s. President Biden’s decision reflects a strong dedication to safeguarding natural resources that are vital to both our economy and ecosystems. His leadership in prioritizing sustainable practices ensures a healthier resilient future for us all. We thank President Biden for his efforts in fostering a balanced approach to energy development and environmental conservation.”

Kawerak, Inc.

“We thank President Biden for issuing these withdraws and honoring over 40 years of Tribal advocacy to protect our food security and marine environment from oil and gas leasing. Kawerak region Tribes have opposed offshore oil and gas drilling in the Northern Bering Sea since the early 1980s. Tribes are the original stewards of the Northern Bering Sea. We depend on a healthy ocean, and we appreciate President Biden for partnering in this stewardship to protect our waters.” [Statement, 1/6/2025]

Bering Sea Elders Group

“The Bering Sea Elders Group extends our sincere gratitude to President Biden and his commitment to protecting the Northern Bering Sea. Our traditional waters of the Bering Sea are interconnected, and protecting these waters helps ensure our food sovereignty, our cultural, economic, physical and traditional existence, and our very survival. BSEG has long opposed offshore oil and gas drilling in the region. We have stewarded these waters for generations and intend to do so for generations to come. We thank President Biden for his leadership and partnership in protecting these waters and our collective future.” [Statement, 1/6/2025]

Center for Western Priorities: [STATEMENT: Biden protects over 625 million acres of U.S. waters from offshore drilling](#)

DENVER— President Joe Biden has announced prohibitions on future oil and gas drilling across parts of the Atlantic Ocean, the Pacific Ocean, the eastern Gulf of Mexico, and the Northern Bering Sea.

This withdrawal will not affect the majority of offshore drilling in the U.S., which takes place in the central and western Gulf of Mexico, according to E&E News. The federal government has not allowed drilling in the eastern Gulf of Mexico since the early 1990s.

The Center for Western Priorities issued the following statement from Executive Director Jennifer Rokala:

“With today’s action President Biden continues to build a great conservation legacy. This will protect hundreds of coastal communities from the dangers of oil and gas drilling. The United States is already producing more oil and gas than ever before. Meanwhile, the oil and gas industry is sitting on over 10 million acres of unused drilling leases on public lands and over

6,000 unused drilling permits. Now is the time to expand clean energy, not double down on fossil fuel extraction.”

The Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk

“The Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk applauds this significant executive action by President Biden to protect more than 625 million acres of U.S. federal waters in the Pacific and Atlantic oceans and the Eastern Gulf of Mexico. By using his executive authority to withdraw these areas from offshore oil and gas development, President Biden once again is demonstrating bold leadership in protecting our natural habitats for future generations, and in steering the nation to address the climate crisis by reducing our use of, and dependence on, fossil fuels,” **said Jason Patlis, President and CEO of The Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk.**

The Ocean Project

“Thank you to the Biden administration for taking this hugely important step to protect America’s coasts and ocean from oil and gas drilling and creating a better future for youth and generations to come,” said Bill Mott, Executive Director of The Ocean Project. “This action continues a strong bipartisan tradition of protecting coastal communities and economies, and safeguarding spectacular ocean wildlife – such as dolphins, sea turtles, fish, and shorebirds,” Mott continued. “Most Americans oppose new offshore drilling, and that’s especially true for younger generations and for those in coastal communities who depend on healthy ocean ecosystems to support jobs in recreation, fishing, and tourism. This action keeps hundreds of coastal communities safer from oil spills.”

Seattle Aquarium

“We celebrate the protection of nearly 250 million acres of federal waters off the west coast—waters that are essential for animals from endangered orcas to fish and seabirds,” **said Robert W. Davidson, President & CEO of the Seattle Aquarium.** “We thank President Biden for taking this essential action to prevent new offshore oil and gas drilling, and protect our one world ocean and the millions of people and all the marine life that depend on it.”

Calusa Waterkeeper

“Calusa Waterkeeper commends the Biden administration actions in protecting our coastal communities and ecosystems with this historic action. Offshore drilling is simply not worth the risk of impact to our Gulf Coast. Whether climate change, risk of spill and or impact to our ground water drinking supply. We encourage the upcoming administration to honor this protection as we face climate challenges that threaten our communities and lives in the years ahead,” **said Capt. Codty Pierce, Calusa Waterkeeper.**

Northern Chumash Tribal Council

“The Northern Chumash Tribal Council extends its heartfelt gratitude to President Biden for his historic decision to protect 625 million acres of ocean waters from future oil and gas leasing. This visionary action honors the legacy of the Chumash People, who bore witness to the devastating 1969 Union oil spill in Santa Barbara—a pivotal event that ignited modern environmental movements, including the establishment of Earth Day. That tragic spill became a turning point, inspiring Americans to challenge the notion that pollution was an inevitable cost of industrial progress. Today, President Biden’s leadership continues this legacy of transformation, ensuring that our ancestral waters, coastal communities, and marine wildlife are safeguarded. We commend the Biden Administration for its unwavering commitment to environmental stewardship, combating climate change, and preserving the nation’s natural treasures for future generations. This decision represents a profound step toward a thriving and resilient future for our oceans and the planet.”

Savannah Riverkeeper

Savannah Riverkeeper celebrates this landmark decision, a victory for the economic viability and livability of coastal communities and marine ecosystems of our eastern seaboard. Our communities have spoken clearly and they are not interested in becoming the Gulf Coast. We have built an economy around retaining the natural components of our oceanfront, not by destroying them. Offshore oil and gas are not wanted here, and we applaud the administration for helping keep them out," **said Tonya Bonitatibus, Savannah Riverkeeper.**

Carolina Ocean Alliance

The Carolina Ocean Alliance congratulates the Biden Administration on its sweeping protection of United States federal waters from new oil and gas drilling. By withdrawing over 600 million acres of federal waters from new petrochemical extraction, President Biden ensured that nearly 40% of Americans living in coastal and ocean communities have the agency we need to restore our coastal ecosystems, earn a sustainable living from healthy coastal fisheries, and protect deep-sea wonders like the Blake Plateau coral mounds.

Grey Gowder, Carolina Ocean Alliance

Bow Seat Future Blue Youth Council

"As a youth advocate committed to ocean conservation and policy reform, a California lifetime resident, and a Bow Seat Future Blue Youth Council member, I deeply appreciate President Biden’s historic decision to protect 625 million acres of federal waters from offshore drilling. This action aligns with the Bow Seat Ocean Awareness Program’s mission to empower young voices in the fight for our oceans. For my generation, this decision not only ensures the preservation of our marine ecosystems but also demonstrates the critical need for global action in addressing the climate crisis. With every step like this, we are securing a healthier, more sustainable future

for the planet, and I am hopeful this will inspire even greater action from future generations and leaders worldwide." - **Gavin Tesser, Bow Seat Future Blue Youth Council Member**

Secretary General Karoline Andaur of the WWF World Wildlife Fund for Nature

Environmentalists in Norway are also praising Biden for taking the climate threat seriously. They are drawing parallels with Norwegian politics.

Biden's example should be followed by Store's government. If we are to be able to slow down climate change in time, we need a plan to transition the Norwegian continental shelf away from oil and gas and towards renewable energy, says Secretary General Karoline Andaur of the WWF World Wildlife Fund for Nature in a statement.

South Carolina Small Business Chamber of Commerce

"Small businesses are very appreciative of President Biden's continued support and actions to protect the Atlantic Coast from offshore oil drilling. Our local coastal economies will now be able to grow without fear of their beaches being covered with oil." **Frank Knapp, South Carolina Small Business Chamber of Commerce**

Tualatin Riverkeepers

"Oregonians are proud that all 363 acres of our coastline are publicly-owned, and our state's residents work tirelessly to protect the coast and waters that are such critical habitat. Tualatin Riverkeepers commends the Biden Administration for taking action to protect the Pacific Coast from new oil and gas leasing. In using his authority under Section 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, President Biden's withdrawals will protect around 250 million acres of Federal waters off the coast of Washington, Oregon, and California, home to a variety of wildlife including seals, sea lions, whales, and fish. This landmark decision helps preserve vital habitats to these species and others by preventing oil spills and reducing threats of offshore oil and gas drilling to the health of coastal communities." - Glenn Fee, Executive Director of the Tualatin Riverkeepers

Riverkeeper

"New Yorkers have rejected the immense harm to coastal communities and wildlife caused by offshore drilling. We have set a course to rapidly transition to renewable energy and we are grateful for the leadership and support of President Biden in this work," said Tracy Brown, president of Riverkeeper. "This decisive action supports the work of water protectors, like Riverkeeper, valuing clean and healthy water above corporate profits."

Environmental Defense Center

“We agree with President Biden that the environmental and economic harms of offshore drilling far outweigh the benefit to the fossil fuel industry. Santa Barbara has already experienced two major oil spill disasters, including the 2015 Refugio spill, which devastated marine life, habitats, and business on the California coast. We are grateful to the President for recognizing the danger inherent in new offshore drilling. However, the biggest threat to our coast is now a proposal by Sable Offshore Corp. to restart three existing platforms in the Santa Barbara Channel, two massive fossil fuel processing sites on shore, and the same failed pipeline that caused the Refugio spill almost 10 years ago. Not only does this project invite another oil spill disaster on the West Coast, but it would significantly increase fossil fuel production and GHG emissions in a state that is supposed to be leading the country on the climate crisis. We hope that Governor Newsom follows President Biden’s lead and shuts this project down before it’s too late,” said Alex Katz, Executive Director of the Environmental Defense Center.